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ABSTRACT

This guide to French language proficiency standards is intended to aid the University of Minnesota's staff in developing curricula and tests for the university's language courses, and to help foreign language teachers outside the university understand the university's language programs. The standards are geared toward the language skills expected of students having completed 3 quarters of university study (for program entrance) or 6 quarters (for graduation). An introductory section outlines the process of developing the standards, the resources necessary for proficiency-oriented programs to bring most students to the levels defined, and notes on interpreting and applying the proficiency guidelines. A section on testing describes the methods and instruments used. For each of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Provisional Proficiency Guidelines are presented and the university's program entrance and graduation standards are outlined. (MSE)

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Foreign Language
Proficiency Standards for Entrance and Graduation

College of Liberal Arts

A Guide for Teachers
of
French

University of Minnesota
1986

The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer and specifically invites and encourages applications from women and minorities.

In the past few years the University of Minnesota has increased what was already a sizable commitment to international education. Part of the increased commitment was a strengthening of the foreign language requirement in the College of Liberal Arts.

The strengthened graduation requirement on the one hand says that a graduate of CLA should have significant skills in at least one foreign language. The entrance standard, on the other hand, signifies CLA support for foreign language learning which occurs prior to admission to CLA, in elementary schools, secondary school, or in other colleges and universities.

Important in the entrance standard and the graduation requirement is the fact that they are stated in terms of proficiency: How well can the student use the language in real communication? A statement in terms of proficiency is a departure from usual measuring of the past. The standard/requirement is not simply a measure of how long students have been enrolled in foreign language classes, nor is it a measure of what students know about the language.

This Guide for Teachers is intended as a guide for our staff in development of curriculum and tests for our CLA language courses. It is also intended for foreign language teachers outside the University so that they may better understand our foreign language programs.

I would like to thank the teachers at the University but particularly teachers from high schools and other colleges who participated in the development of the proficiency standards described in this document. I hope the experience has been as exciting for you as it has for us.

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INTRODUCTION

The College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota has mandated the establishment of proficiency standards according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for entrance to the College and as a requirement for graduation with the B.A. degree. The first step in establishing entrance standards and graduation requirements has been consultation with teachers of French, German and Spanish at all levels of instruction in the state of Minnesota. This group, after lengthy deliberations and training, set preliminary standards for the three most commonly taught languages. Before presentation of the standards and requirements, however, it is essential to present some of the assumptions with which the consultative group operated.

This *Prospectus* is just one attempt on the part of the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota to pass on information to language teachers, school advisers and administrators at all levels of instruction. It is important to point out here what this document is not: it is not a theoretical statement; it is not a curricular guide; it is not a statement on method. By communicating the new standard for entrance and the new requirement for graduation, the College does not intend to interfere in any way with solid programs of second language instruction already available to students throughout the state.

First and foremost, it is important to understand that the CLA proficiency standards are geared to what is expected after three quarters at the University for entrance and, for graduation, after six quarters. "Expected" is not to be interpreted as the goal for an average student at the end of the third or the sixth quarter. The term "expected" means, rather, the level of proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing which most students should have if they pass the course. Any curricular design which desires to prepare its students for entrance or for graduation should set its goals at least one ACTFL level beyond the standards set by CLA for entrance and for graduation.

The preliminary proficiency standards for entrance and graduation are as follows:

	ENTRANCE STANDARD	GRADUATION REQUIREMENT
Listening:	Intermediate Low	Intermediate High
Reading:	Intermediate Low	Intermediate High
Speaking:	Novice High	Intermediate Mid
Writing:	Novice High	Intermediate Mid

The proficiency levels for the Entrance Standard and the Graduation Requirement were the result of a lengthy process of training and deliberation. In Summer 1984, a group of 30 Minnesota teachers of French, German and Spanish completed a three-week intensive ACTFL proficiency training program conducted by nationally known experts. The group had 10 teachers in each of the three languages, and within each language group, there was equal representation from secondary and post-secondary teachers. In the year following this training workshop, most of the 30 teachers continued with a series of three more specialized workshops and follow-up sessions: 1) curricular implications for the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines; 2) testing theories especially for listening, reading and writing; and 3) writing a pool of test items for pilot testing. It is this group of specially trained teachers which entered into lengthy deliberations and decided upon the proficiency levels for the Entrance Standard and the Graduation Requirement.

RESOURCES NECESSARY FOR PROFICIENCY-ORIENTED PROGRAMS TO BRING MOST STUDENTS TO THE LEVELS SET FOR THE ENTRANCE STANDARD AND THE GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

Class Size

The University of Minnesota has decided that individual classes in French, German and Spanish will not exceed 25 students. It is important to emphasize that this maximum of 25 students is not meant as an average; no single class admits more than 25 students. Classes this size allow teachers to maximize opportunities to deal with content,function and accuracy as prescribed in detailed descriptions of levels for the Entrance Standard and the Graduation Requirement (presented in the next main section of this prospectus). Classes this size also permit adequate input, small group work (in threes rather than in fives) as well as regular written exercises for correction and feedback. When schools schedule classes larger than 25 students they may assume that student proficiency will suffer.

Multi-Year Classes

Effective classroom management is not possible where teachers have to teach students who have had 2, 3 and 4 years of instruction and are placed in a single class. Though all second language classes have students at differing proficiency levels, proficiency development is very difficult when the range of levels is too large.

Use of Time

A proportion of classroom time (up to 40%) should be spent on proficiency practice where the focus of the lesson is on the expression of meaning rather than accuracy. If proficiency practice forces some drill out of the classroom, this accuracy drill may be accomplished through homework or by means of computer courseware. Group work, use of paired learning, etc, may allow more time for proficiency-oriented activities. Time for proficiency development is a critical factor. The amount of time on task for the development of proficiency in an academic year is limited.

There are approximately 115 hours in an academic year on the college/university level; there are approximately 170 hours on the secondary school level of which 100 hours are estimated to be time on task.

Equipment

The following needs are considered minimal by University staff to provide for an effective proficiencybased curriculum in the College of Liberal Arts.

FOR THE CLASSROOM

- An overhead projector
- Tape recorder
- Slide-filmstrip projector
- Movie projector
- Small groups: junction box (to connect with tape recorder) and headsets
- Access to video recording and playback
- Adequate supplies, e.g., photocopying, courseware, thermofax
- Resource materials, e.g., dictionaries, at least one major newspaper or magazine, cultural resource materials, a range of reading and listening materials

FOR THE PROGRAM

- A learning laboratory with the following:
- Listening/record stations which allow students both to listen and to record
- Audio-cassette library
- High-speed audio-cassette copier (home study cassettes)
- Portable video record and playback facilities
- Video-cassette library
- Microcomputers (IBM, Apple, Macintosh)
- Computer disk library
- Courseware generation systems need to be available to the instructional staff, e.g., DASHER, which can generate drill materials

Personnel

Staff development should be commensurate with the concept of proficiency; teachers should have the opportunity to become aware of and to use proficiency development concepts in their teaching and curricula. Supervision of instruction should be based on proficiency concepts. Advanced students, Amity aides and other native speakers may be used as informants to help develop proficiency in a proficiency-based curriculum, and team teaching in this kind of program could be useful in presenting a model of communication. Staff exchanges between and among levels could help teachers remain up-to-date in the language. Pre- and in-service teacher preparation should include the following:

1) Cooperative group structures in learning
2) Proficiency-based curricular design
3) Language skills
4) General language teaching methods
5) Testing of language development

At the University, TA's need to have background in language learning and teaching, in addition to a background in their specialization for graduate study. Professional associations (e.g., MCTFL and the AAT groups) could provide opportunities to help teachers keep their language current.

Materials

Publishers must be encouraged to orient materials toward proficiency development, since teachers need support from systematically prepared materials.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTIONS

The descriptions of proficiency at each level in each skill contain three components: content, function, and accuracy. Thus, the descriptions in each of the language skill areas (i.e., listening, reading, speaking, and writing) include information about the topics or *content* areas with which the student is familiar, the linguistic *functions* or tasks that can be expressed and/or understood, as well as the degree of *accuracy* with which the message is communicated and/or understood. Judgments of an individual's proficiency take all three factors into account.

In both the Entrance Standard and Exit Requirement, certain functions, topics, and accuracy levels are expected to be controlled in a sustained manner while others are controlled only partially. Sustained control can be described by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually", while partial control is described by modifiers such as "uneven" or "occasionally". Thus, at the level of Novice High, the student will consistently be able to "list using memorized utterances and use memorized material to ask and answer simple questions" in content areas covering basic social formulae and basic topic areas, but will only sometimes be able to "create statements or questions and participate in very simple face-to-face conversations." Note that at the level of Novice High there is no consistent accuracy. The student's speech will contain numerous errors and will at times be incomprehensible. However, the student will sometimes be able to use the present-tense of the most common regular and irregular verbs and use the concept of subject/verb agreement.

USING THE PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTIONS

How are the following description of proficiency intended to be used? Let's first make it clear what they are not intended to be used for. They are only descriptions of the minimal proficiency expected at each level. They should therefore be interpreted neither as statements of goals, nor as descriptions of curriculum. Given the gradual, developmental nature of the language acquisition process, the curriculum of a second language program must be targeted well beyond these proficiency descriptions. In fact, it is only when we incorporate in the curriculum functions and content which go beyond the minimal proficiency levels that the minimal levels themselves will be

attained by our students. Thus, the guidelines do not in themselves constitute a curriculum but are rather only a framework for a curriculum. In the same way, the guidelines are not in themselves tests of language proficiency, but rather a framework for testing.

In addition to serving as a framework for curriculum and testing, the guidelines provide a potentially very useful aid to communication about language learning between all parties interested in this process. The guidelines give us a more precise picture of the language learning process than we have had before, plus providing a relatively standard framework of levels, so that we can talk with each other with much more certainty that we understand each other. Thus, the guidelines are already facilitating communication across educational levels such as elementary to secondary and secondary to college and university, enabling us to begin to deal with the problems of articulation across these levels. Another important area of communication is that between language educators and their "clients" or other persons to whom they are responsible, namely students, parents, and administrators. The guidelines offer us concrete concepts for talking about what are realistic expectations for the outcome of language study in a given situation.

You will notice that we have included in what follows the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for all levels (except those described for the College of Liberal Arts entrance standards and exit requirements, where they have been broken into content, function and accuracy). The description of the Superior level is included in order to set the levels we are primarily concerned with into a larger developmental context. It must be kept in mind that reaching the Superior level normally takes years of study as well as living in the culture, and this is in fact a relatively infrequent accomplishment.

TESTING

Testing of language proficiency is integral to the CLA language requirement. There are two test batteries, one for the Entrance Standard and one for the Exit Requirement. Each test will include the four modalities of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The battery for the Entrance Standard tests listening and reading at Intermediate-Low, and speaking and writing at Novice-High. The battery for the Exit Requirement tests listening and reading at Intermediate-High, and speaking and writing at Intermediate-Mid.

These tests are criterion referenced tests which means that they are directly related to the descriptions of proficiency at the levels designated for the four modalities within the Entrance Standard or Exit Requirement. The form of the test is analogous to the Oral Interview Procedure. Several items, approximately 20%, are used as a warm-up. They are below the designated proficiency levels and are intended to give the student an opportunity to "get into the language". Forty percent of the items are at the designated level in what is called a Level Check. This number of items is to assure that students can sustain the designated proficiency level. Another 20% of the items in the test are in a category called Probe. These items are expected to push the student beyond the expected proficiency level. The final 20% of the items or Wind-Down intend to bring the student back to the level of proficiency designated for that modality. These are items that the individual, having the desired level, should feel comfortable responding to. It is intended that the students would leave the tests with a feeling that they are successful. In this test battery, the test items are not ordered in the usual easy to most difficulty items. Instead, they are organized by Warm-up, Level Check, Probe, and Wind-Down.

The manner of testing for proficiency at the Entrance Standard Level is generally well-known. The Reception Modalities (Listening and Reading) will be tested with the usual multiple-choice items for objective scoring. These tests have two foci: some discrete elements of a text and general comprehension. Some texts will be tested with several questions. Their intent is to determine if the student got the details in the text. Other texts will have only one question. Those items are intended to require a general comprehension of the text. For the Production Modalities (Speaking and Writing), the tests require students to produce language. The Speaking Test is a recorded test. Students respond to questions on a pre-recorded tape. For the Writing Test, students will respond to questions in writing.

These tests will be timed. The Speaking Test takes approximately 20 minutes. The tests for Listening, Reading, and Writing take approximately 45 minutes each. There will be ample time within this framework for students to demonstrate their ability to sustain proficiency at the designated levels.

Novice-Low:

No practical understanding of spoken French. Understanding is limited to cognates, borrowed words, high frequency social conventions, and occasional isolated words, such as *oui*, *merci*, *café*, *magnifique*, *mademoiselle*. Essentially no ability to comprehend even short utterances.

Novice-Mid:

Sufficient comprehension to understand some memorized words within predictable areas of need. Vocabulary for comprehension is limited to simple elementary needs, basic courtesy formulae, and very simple memorized material relating to everyday objects and situations, such as *Bonjour*, *Bonsoir*, *Comment-allez-vous?* *Où habitez-vous?* *Comment vous appelez-vous?* Utterances understood rarely exceed more than two or three words at a time, and ability to understand is characterized by long pauses for assimilation and by repeated requests on the listener's part for repetition, and/or a slower rate of speech. Confuses words that sound similar, such as *vingt/viens/vin*, *demain/deux mains*, *couture/culture*.

Novice-High:

Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate need. Comprehends slightly longer utterances in situations where the context aids understanding, such as at the table, in a restaurant/store, in a train/bus. Phrases recognized have for the most part been memorized; *Passez-moi du beurre.* *Avez-vous du pain?* *Le billet coûte 10 francs.* *Vous désirez?* Comprehends vocabulary common to daily needs. Comprehends simple questions/statements about family members, age, address, weather, time, daily activities and interests: *Etes-vous marié?* *Vous avez des enfants?* *Combien de frères et de soeurs avez-vous?* *Quel temps fait-il?* Misunderstandings arise from failure to perceive critical sounds or endings. Understands even tailored speech with difficulty but gets some main ideas. Often requires repetition and/or a slowed rate of speed for comprehension, even when listening to persons such as teachers who are accustomed to speaking with non-natives.

FRENCH ENTRANCE STANDARD: Listening (Intermediate-Low)

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls:	Is usually able to:	Is usually able to understand:
--basic survival needs	--understand memorized utterances	--main ideas
--minimum courtesy requirements	--understand non-memorized simple questions, statements, and instructions	--with repetition and/or slowed rate of speech
--daily activities such as meals, transportation, time, weather, family		
--classroom instructions		

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls:	Is sometimes able to:	Is sometimes able to understand:
--other survival needs such as travel and lodging	--understand face-to-face conversations in standard French	--references to future and past time
--limited social conventions	--understand route directions and routine commands	
--personal history		
--leisure time activities		

ACTFL PROVISIONAL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES: FRENCH LISTENING

Intermediate-Mid

Sufficient comprehension to understand simple conversations about some survival needs and some limited social conventions. Vocabulary permits understanding of topics beyond basic survival needs (e.g., personal history and leisure time activities), such as *Où êtes-vous né? Quel est votre passe-temps favori? Qu'aimez-vous faire le week-end?* Evidence of understanding basic constructions, e.g., subject-verb agreement, evidence that some inflection is understood. Candidate's understanding of grammatical structure allows recognition of future and past references either by verb forms *(futur proche, futur, passé composé,* and *imparfait)* or by adverbs, adjectives, or prepositions of time *(bientôt, demain, hier, l'année dernière, avant, depuis).*

FRENCH EXIT REQUIREMENT: Listening (Intermediate-High)

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls:	Is usually able to:	Is usually able to:
--survival needs	--understand short conversations	--understand the more common tense forms
--limited social conventions	--get the gist of longer conversations	--understand most question forms
--some topics beyond basic survival needs such as personal history, leisure activities		
--familiar topics relating to home, school, daily activities, simple purchases, directions		

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls: --well-known current events --routine social conventions --simple school or work requirements	Is sometimes able to: --comprehend longer conversations and descriptions --get the gist of simple radio broadcasts, discussions, and speeches on topics of special interest --understand narration about current, past, and future events	Is sometimes able to: --understand without repetition --understand face-to-face speech in standard French spoken at a normal rate,* by a native speaker not accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers

*with some rewording and repetition

ACTFL PROVISIONAL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES: FRENCH LISTENING

Advanced

Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations about routine social conventions and limited school or work requirements. Able to understand face-to-face speech in standard French spoken at a normal rate with some repetition and rewording, by a native speaker not accustomed to dealing with foreigners. Able to get the gist of radio broadcasts. Understands everyday topics, common personal and family news, well-known current events, and routine matters involving school or work; descriptions and narration about current, past and future events; the essential points of a discussion or speech at an elementary level on topics in special fields of interest. For example: *Est-ce que votre spécialité nécessite une formation particulière? Comment les Européens ont-ils réagi à l'installation des engins nucléaires en Europe? La classe moyenne est-elle la plus affectée par l'inflation?*

Advanced Plus

Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social conventions, conversations on school or work requirements, and discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable ability and ease of understanding, but comprehension may break down under tension or pressure (including unfavorable listening conditions). May display weakness or deficiency due to inadequate vocabulary base or less-than-secure knowledge of grammar and syntax. May be deficient or uneven in completely comprehending conversations or discussions by educated native speakers due to a less-than-adequate knowledge of more complex syntactic structure (tense usage in simple and complex statements, passive voice constructions, relative clauses, word order, subject-object relationships). Still has some difficulty following radio broadcasts. Can sometimes detect emotional overtones. Increasing ability to understand between the lines (i.e., to make inferences).

Superior

Sufficient comprehension to understand the essentials of all speech in standard dialects, including technical discussions within a special field. Has sufficient understanding of face-to-face speech, delivered with normal clarity and speed in standard dialects on general topics and areas of special interest; understands hypothesizing and supported opinions. Has broad enough vocabulary that rarely has to ask for paraphrasing or explanation. Can follow accurately the essentials of conversations between educated native speakers, reasonably clear telephone calls, radio broadcasts, standard news items, oral reports, some oral technical reports, and public addresses on non-technical subjects. May not understand native speakers if they speak very quickly or use some slang or unfamiliar dialect. Can often detect emotional overtones. Can understand "between the lines" (i.e., make inferences).

Novice-Low

No functional ability in reading French.

Novice-Mid

Sufficient understanding of written French to interpret highly contextualized words or cognates within predictable areas. Vocabulary for comprehension limited to simple elementary needs, such as names, addresses, dates, signs indicating names of streets and avenues (*rue, voie)*; building names (*café, aéroport, restaurant)*; short informative signs (*entrée, danger, taxi)*. Material understood rarely exceeds a single phrase and comprehension requires successive rereading and checking.

Novice-High

Sufficient comprehension of written language to interpret set expressions in areas of immediate need. Can recognize all letters of printed French (but very little which is handwritten), and is familiar with French punctuation and diacritical marks (é, è, ô, ä, ç). Where vocabulary has been mastered, can read for instructional and directional purposes standardized messages, phrases or expressions, such as some items on menus (*poulet, bifteck, salade, thé)*, schedules, timetables, maps, signs indicating hours of operation, social codes (*Défense de Fumer)*, and street signs (*Arrêt Fixe)*. Vocabulary and grammar limited to the most common nouns, adjectives, question words, and a few verb forms. Material is read for essential information. Detail is overlooked or misunderstood.

FRENCH ENTRANCE STANDARD: Reading (Intermediate-Low)

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls:	Is usually able to:	Usually understands:
--simple messages, greetings, and social amenities	--understand mastered materials and recombinations of these	--high frequency grammatical patterns which parallel structures of English
--everyday survival materials including visual and contextual clues, e.g.,schedules, maps, announcements, advertisements, forms, menus	--understand main ideas of simplest connected discourse	--common regular and irregular verbs in the present tense: e.g., avoir, être, savoir, faire, vouloir, pouvoir, comprendre
	--extract essential information from "survival" materials	--common idioms: faire plus adjective, il y a, avoir plus age, aller plus adverb, and à plus hour for time
		--negation with ne...pas, ne... jamais

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls:	Is sometimes able to:	Sometimes understands:
--names of products and prices for clothing, food, school supplies, and travel	--understand simple prose for informative and social purposes	--past and future time with passé composé and adverbs of time: demain, hier, plus tard, avant, après, à x heures
--descriptions of persons, family, ages, occupations, residence, personality traits, preferences, leisure activities	--understand general content of headlines in newspapers or magazine articles, if the content is familiar or of high interest	--common reflexive verbs
	--understand facts and follow events in simple narration	--common idioms with avóir and faire
		--basic noun modifiers, i.e., all common determiners (definite + indefinite, partitives, possessives, demonstratives, interrogatives) + descriptive adjectives (before and after) + expressions of of quantity

FRENCH EXIT REQUIREMENT: Reading (Intermediate-High)

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Consistently controls:	Is consistently able to:	Is consistently able to:
--descriptive material on daily life and routines, biographical information, leisure activities, travel, movies, and other general-interest topics	--understand simple paragraphs for personal communication, information or recreation	--follow connected discourse with simple cohesive elements (puis, ensuite, qui, que, some object pronouns)
	--read invitations, social notes, personal letters and very simple business letters	--interpret: most expressions of quantity, most ad-adjectives and adverbs, the use of passé composé, common reflective verbs, idioms with avoir and faire
	--understand the main idea in simple articles in popular magazines and other nontechnical information sources	
	--read for pleasure uncomplicated authentic prose or edited prose and simple poetry	

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls:	Is sometimes able to:	Is sometimes able to:
--current events --familiar subjects (e.g. sports, movies, theater, food, music), news items, biographical information, and family topics	--read simple authentic printed material or edited textual material --read uncomplicated, authentic prose, newspapers, popular magazines, personal letters --read unedited simple prose fiction from carefully chosen authors, usually contemporary (e.g. selections in Sunday newspaper supplements, selections in daily newspapers, special anthologies on culture)	--appreciate distinctions between use of passé composé and imperfect --interpret the future of regular and irregular verbs --interpret more complex cohesive devices such as object pronouns, relative pronouns, conjunctions

Advanced

Sufficient comprehension to read simple authentic printed material or edited textual material within a familiar context. Can read uncomplicated, authentic prose on familiar subjects (sports, travel, movies, theater, food, music, current events), news items in newspapers and popular magazines, biographical information in personal letters on family topics. Reads within the limits of identifiable vocabulary some unedited texts, such as prose fiction, from carefully chosen authors, usually contemporary. Such selections might appear in Sunday newspaper supplements, other daily papers, or special anthologies on modern culture. Can usually appreciate distinctions between the *passé compose'* and the *imparfait* and the future of regular and irregular verbs. Can correctly interpret compound subjects with some understanding of complex (embedded) sentences which use one object pronoun, prepositional phrases and relative pronouns. Can understand the most salient facts and supporting information but subtle nuances and inferences will remain undetected.

Advanced Plus

Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual information in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special interests. Able to read for information and description, to follow sequence of events, and to react to information read. Can separate main ideas from lesser ones and use the division to advance understanding. In major newspapers and magazines, can read international items and social and cultural news. Understanding of specialized items depends upon individual interests and background, at this level can read material in own areas of interest. Within literary fields of interest, can read non-esoteric prose, including critical articles and books. Can read signs, posters, advertisements, and public announcements. Can follow simple printed directions for cooking and other projects within areas of expertise. Guesses logically at new words by

Advanced Plus continued

using linguistic and non-linguistic contexts and prior knowledge. Is able to comprehend most high-frequency idiomatic expressions, but will still have difficulty with figurative meanings. Can correctly interpret temporal differences as indicated by forms which differ from the native language (e.g., *depuis* and *il y a* with the present) and by the use of the *passé composé* and the *imparfait* of regular and most irregular verbs (including reflexives) as well as distinction between the future and the *futur proche.* Will draw correct conclusions from simple *si* clauses (*si* + present + future). Although the subjunctive (with impersonals such as *il faut, il est nécessaire,* and with certain verbs of emotion, *vouloir, aimer)* is understood, as are adjectives whose meaning changes with position (*ancien professeur, professeur ancien, la semaine dernière, la dernière semaine)* the reader will still have difficulty detecting attitudes, values, and judgments. Will be sensitive to distinctions made by the use of the comparative and superlative forms and exclusions made with most negatives. Will have personal responses to written material of a literal nature (either factual information in news items or descriptive narrative in prose) but will still have difficulty with figurative meanings.

Superior

Able to read standard newspaper items addressed to the general reader, routine correspondence reports and technical material in a field of interest at a normal rate of speed (at least 220 WPM). Can gain new knowledge from material in a variety of publications on a wide range of unfamiliar topics related to fields of interest. Can interpret hypotheses, supported opinions, and documented facts, as well as figurative devices, stylistic differences, and humor. Can read most literary genres in the original: novels, essays, poetry, short stories, and most literature written for the general public. Reading ability is not subject dependent. Broad general vocabulary, knowledge of most structures, and development of strategies for logical guessing allow for successful interpretation of unfamiliar words, idioms, or structures. Verb tenses and moods have been largely mastered. Can interpret the *passé simple* as well as hypotheticals involving *si* clauses (*imparfait-conditional, plus-que parfait* and *conditionnel passé)* as well as the subjunctive, several passive constructions (with *être, on,* and pronominal verbs). Able to achieve overall comprehension of material, even though there may be some gaps in detail. Is generally able to comprehend facts, although misinterpretation may still occur. Can draw inferences, but may be unable to appreciate nuances or stylistics.

Novice-Low

Unable to function in spoken French. Oral production is limited to occasional isolated words or expressions which have been borrowed into English or which are cognates of English words. Some examples are: *voilà, c'est la vie, cuisine, auto, table.* Essentially no communicative ability.

Novice-Mid

Able to operate only in a very limited capacity within very predictable areas of need. Vocabulary is limited to that necessary to express simple elementary needs and basic courtesy formulae, such as *Bonjour, Au revoir, Comment allez-vous?, Très bien, merci, Je m'appelle...*, etc. Syntax is fragmented, verbs are used mostly in the infinitive form, and there is little or no subject-verb agreement or noun-adjective agreement. The majority of utterances consist of isolated words or short formulae. Utterances are marked and often flawed by repetition of an interlocutor's words (*Q: Quel sport préférez-vous? *A: Vous préférez le sport tennis.)* and frequent long pauses; speakers at this level cannot create original sentences or cope with the simplest situations. Pronunciation is frequently unintelligible and is strongly influenced by the first language. Can be understood only with difficulty, even by persons such as teachers who are used to dealing with non-native speakers or in interactions where the context strongly supports the utterances.

FRENCH ENTRANCE STANDARD: Speaking (Novice-High)

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls:	Is usually able to:	No consistent accuracy
--basic social formulae (greetings, leave-takings, etc.) --basic topic areas such as: colors, clothing, food, numbers from zero to 60, days of the week, months, weather, time of day, parts of the body, family members, and basic objects (classroom and home)	--answer questions reusing information contained in the question, using memorized information, or lists --ask basic memorized information questions	SEE PARTIAL CONTROL

*Denotes an error characteristic of speakers at this level.

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls:	Is sometimes able to:	Is sometimes able to:
--basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements	--formulate and answer simple questions	--be understood by persons accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers
--familiar topic areas such as: public places, food, sports, leisure, school, occupations, transportation, description of family members, shopping, daily schedule	--participate in simple face-to-face conversation	--use: -basic word order, SVO -negation with ne...pas -est-ce que questions -present tense of common regular and irregular verbs -questions words où, quand, pourquoi, comment -aller + infinitive for future time

ACTFL PROVISIONAL PROFICIENCY STANDARDS: FRENCH SPEAKING

Intermediate-Low

Able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can ask and answer some simple questions, can respond to and sometimes initiate simple statements, and can maintain simple face-to-face conversations. Can ask and answer questions such as *Quel âge avez-vous? Comment vous appelez-vous? Combien de frères et de soeurs avez-vous? Qu'est ce que tu étudies?*. Can sustain a short conversation on such familiar topics as characteristics of self and family members (name, age, physical description), location and description of home, school, or workplace, and other topics that involve an exchange of simple factual information. Can make one's needs known with great difficulty in a simple survival situation, such as ordering a meal, getting a hotel room, and asking for directions. Vocabulary is inadequate to express anything beyond basic information on familiar subjects and elementary needs. Little precision in information can be conveyed and misunderstandings frequently arise because of limited vocabulary, numerous grammatical errors, and poor pronunciation and intonation. There is some control of the present tense of regular verbs and the more common irregular verbs and of gender, number, and subject-verb agreement. Can give simple answers in the negative, limited to the *ne...pas* construction. Misunderstandings frequently arise from limited vocabulary and grammar and erroneous phonology, but, with repetition, can generally be understood by native speakers in regular contact with foreigners attempting to speak French. Little precision in information conveyed owing to tentative state of grammatical development and little or no use of modifiers.

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls: --routine travel and survival needs --basic personal information, i.e. simple autobiographical details, leisure time activities, daily schedule	Is usually able to: --ask and answer questions --initiate and respond to simple statements --maintain simple face-to-face conversation --handle with some details transactions in situations such as restaurant, bank, post office, hotel, drugstore	Is usually able to: --be understood by persons used to dealing with non-native speakers --demonstrate grammatical accuracy in basic structures, e.g. subject-verb agreement, adjective placement and noun-adjective agreement, present tense of regular verbs and some irregular verbs (avoir, être, aller, faire, vouloir, pouvoir, savoir, devoir, comprendre) --express future time with aller+ infinitive

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls: --routine social demands --factual topics beyond basic survival needs --past activities and future plans --topics of current public interest (e.g. current events, student rules and regulations) --basic personal information with more details)	Is sometimes able to: --initiate and sustain social and general conversations --provide simple description and narration --communicate facts and explain points of view in simple fashion --make factual comparisons --communicate needs and thoughts in a situation with a complication (e.g., calling a mechanic for help with a stalled car, losing traveler's checks)	Is sometimes able to: --use the partitive (negative and affirmative), demonstrative adjectives, expressions of quantity --use common adverbs --use idiomatic expressions with avoir and faire --use passé composé and imperfect of regular + some irregular verbs --use basic reflexive verbs --be understood by native speakers not used to dealing with non-native speakers

Intermediate-High

Able to satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands. Developing flexibility in language production although fluency is still uneven. Can initiate and sustain a general conversation on factual topics beyond basic survival needs. Can give autobiographical information and discuss leisure time activities. To a lesser degree, can talk about some past activities and future plans and non-personal topics, such as activities of organizations, and descriptions of events, although ability to describe and give precise information in these areas is limited. Can provide sporadically, although not consistently, simple description and narration of present, past, future events, although limited vocabulary range and insufficient control of grammar lead to much hesitation and inaccuracy. Extended discourse is largely a series of short, discrete utterances; cannot sustain coherent structures in longer utterances by the use of conjunctions or relative clauses. Some control of the *passé composé* and basic reflexive verbs. May be able to use some direct and indirect object pronouns, although syntax may still be faulty. Is able to use the partitive (affirmative and negative), demonstrative adjectives, most expressions of quantity, most adverbs, and some idiomatic expressions with *avoir* and *faire*. Comprehensible to native speakers accustomed to dealing with foreigners, but still has to repeat utterances frequently to be understood by the general public.

Advanced

Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility most social and general conversations. Can narrate, describe, and explain in past, present, and future time. Can communicate facts--what, who, when, where, how much--and can explain points of view in an uncomplicated fashion, but cannot conjecture or coherently support an opinion. Can talk in a general way about topics of current public interest (e.g., current events, student rules and regulations), as well as personal interest (work, leisure time activities) and can give autobiographical information. Can make factual comparisons, such as college life vs. high school life. Can handle limited work requirements, needing help in handling any complications or difficulties. Can make a point forcefully and communicate needs and

Advanced Plus

Able to satisfy most work requirements and show some ability to communicate on concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Can narrate, describe, and explain in past, present, and future time. Can communicate facts and explain points of view in an uncomplicated fashion consistently. Shows some ability to support opinions, explain in detail, and hypothesize, although only sporadically. Can discuss topics of current interest and personal interest, and can handle routine work requirements and some complications. Can handle situations involving complications that arise in everyday life (see Advanced Level examples) but will have difficulty with unfamiliar situations (e.g., losing a contact lens in a sink drain and going to a neighbor to borrow a wrench). Normally controls general vocabulary, with some groping still evident. Speaking performance is often uneven (strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but not both, for example). Areas of weakness in grammar can range from simple constructions such as noun-adjective, gender, and subject-verb agreement to more complex structures such as tense usage (imperfect vs. *passé composé)*, and relative clauses. Only sporadic ability to use the present subjunctive, which is usually limited to impersonal expressions (*il faut que, il est important que)* and *vouloir que* constructions. Is usually able to use possessive, demonstrative, and double object pronouns correctly as well as to handle the difference between *c'est* and *il est.* Often shows remarkable fluency and ease of speech, but under tension or pressure language may break down.

Superior

Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social and professional topics. Can discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease. Can support opinions, hypothesize, and conjecture. May not be able to tailor language to fit various audiences or discuss highly abstract topics in depth. Vocabulary is broad enough that speaker rarely has to grope for a word; good use of circumlocution. Pronunciation may still be obviously foreign. Control of grammar is good. Good control of *passé composé* vs. imperfect; uses the present subjunctive appropriately most of the time. Partial control of *si* clauses, particularly in hypothetical statements. Correct use of the future tense with conjunctions such as *quand, dès que*, etc., and good control of negations, including *ne...ni...ni*, negation of the infinitive, and *ne...que.* Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker.

Novice-Low
No functional ability in writing French.

Novice-Mid
No practical communicative writing skills. Able to copy isolated words and short phrases. Able to transcribe previously studied words or phrases. Able to write name, address, dates and other numbers, as well as common expressions such as those used in greetings and leave-takings.

FRENCH ENTRANCE STANDARD: Writing (Novice-High)

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls:	Is usually able to:	No consistent accuracy
--dates, months, days of the week	--copy and transcribe	SEE PARTIAL CONTROL
--nationality (nationalities)	--make lists	
--addresses and other biographical information, including family	--write in short phrases and sentences	
--common objects (home and school)	--write very simple questions and answers based on memorized or very familiar material	
--some parts of the body		
--numbers zero to 20		
--basic social formulae		

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls:	Is sometimes able to:	Is sometimes able to use:
--familiar topics grounded in personal experience: likes and dislikes, daily routines, date and times, everyday events	--create statements through recombinations of memorized material into simple sentences	--basic word order (SVO)
--numbers 20 to 100	--write short messages, e.g., phone messages, simple notes, post cards	--some common adjectives and adverbs
	--take simple notes on familiar topics	--negative ne...pas
		--interrogatives: est-ce que and common question words (où, quand, comment, pourquoi
		--present tense of some common regular verbs; some forms of common irregular verbs, (e.g., avoir, être, aller, faire)
		--gender and noun/adjective/article agreement
		--aller + infinitive for future time
		--adverbs of time (e.g., demain, ce soir, la semaine prochaine)

Intermediate-Low

Has sufficient control of the writing system to meet limited practical needs. Can write short messages, such as simple questions or notes, postcards, phone messages and the like. Can take simple notes on material dealing with very familiar topics within the scope of limited language experience. Can create statements or questions in the present tense or compound future using negative and interrogative constructions, within the scope of limited language experience. Material produced consists of recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures into simple sentences. Can express present and future time, the latter by using the present tense plus infinitive construction or the present tense and adverbs of time such as *demain, ce soir, la semaine prochaine, l'année prochaine.* For example: *J'ai un examen demain; Je vais à Paris la semaine prochaine.* Generally cannot express past time using past tenses, but may incorrectly use the present tense and an adverb of time such as *hier, hier soir, ce matin,* to convey past meaning. Uses sporadically forms such as possessive adjectives, demonstrative and interrogative adjectives, and partitive articles, but not always correctly. Vocabulary is limited to common objects and cognates, and is inadequate to express anything but elementary needs. Can express numbers from 1-100 with some misspellings. Often inserts native-language vocabulary for unknown words, and is generally not capable of circumlocution to get meaning across. Writing tends to be a loose collection of sentences or sentence fragments on very familiar topics (likes and dislikes, general routine, everyday events or situations). Makes continual errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation, but writing can be read and understood by a native reader accustomed to dealing with foreigners. Able to produce appropriately some fundamental sociolinguistic distinctions in formal and familiar style, such as appropriate subject pronouns, titles of address and basic social formulae.

FRENCH EXIT REQUIREMENT: Writing (Intermediate-Mid)

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls:	Is usually able to:	Is usually able to:
--simple survival needs --very simple social demands --familiar topics grounded in personal experience (e.g. likes and dislikes, daily routines, dates and times, everyday events, immediate surroundings at home and in the classroom)	--write short paragraphs and simple letters --take simple notes --write simple descriptions	--use futur proche and present tense of common regular and irregular verbs, including reflexive verbs --produce writing which is comprehensible to native speakers accustomed to reading French written by non-native speakers

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls: --survival needs relating to food, lodging, transportation, immediate surroundings --simple social demands --familiar topics (e.g. autobiographical information, preferences, daily routine, everyday events and situations) --biographical data --work experience --factual topics --simple current events	Is sometimes able to: --take notes in some detail --write simple letters and simple discourse of several paragraphs --write cohesive summaries --write short compositions --write short narratives and descriptions --use a bilingual dictionary to express simple ideas	Is sometimes able to use: --passé composé with both avoir and être auxiliaries, imperfect and future forms --common avoir and faire expressions --correct gender, adjective agreement and placement --some object pronouns and some relative pronouns (e.g., qui, que) --partitive and other determiners --common negative expressions in all tenses (e.g., personne, rien, jamais) --adverbs to modify verbs and adjectives

ACTFL PROVISIONAL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES: FRENCH WRITING

Intermediate-High

Sufficient control of writing system to meet most survival needs and limited social demands. Can take notes in some detail on familiar topics (autobiographical information, preferences, daily routine, simple descriptions and narration of everyday events and situations) and respond to personal questions on such topics using elementary vocabulary and common structures. Can write simple letters, brief synopses and paraphrases, summaries of biographical data and work experience, and short compositions on familiar topics. Can create sentences and short paragraphs relating to most survival needs (food, lodging, transportation, immediate surroundings and situations) and limited social demands. Can express fairly accurately present and future time, using the *futur proche* and present tense of most common regular and irregular verbs, including reflexive verbs. Uses some common *avoir* and *faire* expressions. Can use the *passé composé* with both *avoir* and *être* auxiliaries, but does not always use it correctly or appropriately. Shows good control of elementary vocabulary and some control of basic syntactic patterns (some object pronouns, partitive and other determiners, use of *de* after negative and quantity expressions, use of negative in past tenses and *futur proche* with correct placement, etc.). Major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts. Dictionary usage may still yield incorrect vocabulary or forms, although can use a dictionary to advantage to express simple ideas. Generally does not use basic cohesive elements of discourse to advantage (relative constructions, object pronouns, especially *y* and *en*, connectors, and the like). Writing, though faulty, is comprehensible to native speakers accustomed to reading French written by non-natives. Is able to express a few thoughts for which vocabulary is unknown via circumlocution, but may insert native-language equivalents for unknown words or use native-language syntactic patterns when expressing ideas beyond current level of linguistic competence.

Advanced

Able to write routine social correspondence and simple discourse of at least several paragraphs on familiar topics. Can write simple social correspondence, take notes, and write cohesive summaries, resumés, and short narratives and descriptions on factual topics. Able to write about everyday topics by using adjectives, both regular and irregular patterns (e.g., masculines ending in *-eux, -if, -al)* with mostly correct agreements and word order. Able to modify both verbs and adjectives with adverbs although word order not always correct, especially with *passé composé*. Able to narrate events using present, *passé composé*, imperfect and future forms, although the contrast between uses of the two past tenses may not be consistently accurate. Occasional use of some conditional forms to express preference and ability (i.e., *je voudrais, je pourrais...)*. Has sufficient writing vocabulary to express oneself simply with some circumlocutions. Can write about a very limited number of current events or daily situations and express personal preferences and observations in some detail using basic structures. Is able to recycle new but meaningful phrases whether lexical or structural, i.e., lifts phrases appropriately, writing appears more sophisticated. When writing own thoughts, is more likely to paraphrase according to native language at times. Continues to make spelling errors where sound-symbol correspondence is radically different from English *(-ail, -eille)*, where there are multiple ways of spelling a single sound *(é,ai,et...)* and with silent letters. Shows control of most elision *(l',c',m',t',qu')* but may overgeneralize *(qui* to *qu')* and heeds most punctuation conventions. Good control of morphology in verb tenses: correct endings for regular and irregular verbs in tenses mentioned above. Also uses correct endings for adjective agreement, and able to add *-ment* to derive adverbs from adjectives. Controls frequently used structures such as negatives, interrogatives, prepositions of location; determiners are handled accurately for form (although lapses in gender assignment occur) but there is incorrect choice as to definite, indefinite, or partitive for accurate meaning. Preposition use after verbs or adjectives is often inaccurate. Writing is understandable by a native speaker not used to reading French written by non-natives. Writer uses a limited number of cohesive devices such as a single object pronoun (direct or indirect) or *y* or *en* but does so when the repetition of the noun would be in close proximity to the original naming. Some use of *qui, que* to combine sentences and some common conjunctions are used (*parce que, quand, où*, etc.). Able to join sentences in limited discourse, but has difficulty and makes frequent errors producing complex sentences requiring tense accords (e.g., *quand* plus future, conjunctions requiring a subjunctive *si* clauses with other than a present in the result). Paragraphs are reasonably unified and coherent.

Advanced Plus

Shows ability to write about most common topics with precision and in some detail. Can write fairly detailed resumés and summaries and take accurate notes. Can handle most informal and business correspondence. Can describe and narrate personal experiences and explain simply point of view in prose discourse by using introductory phrases (e.g., *A mon avis..., je (ne) pense (pas)...je (ne) crois (pas)...je (ne) suis (pas) sûr...)*. Can write about concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Normally controls general vocabulary with circumlocution or modification where necessary, e.g., may use negation plus lexical item for an unknown antonym, or modify words with *très, beaucoup de*, etc., if a more specific term is unknown or resort to a category label for unknown components. Often shows remarkable fluency or ease of expression, but under time constraints (e.g., no opportunity to rewrite), and pressure (e.g., testing), language may be inaccurate and/or incomprehensible, especially if important lexical items are missing or if inaccurate tense usage interferes with meaning.

Advanced Plus (continued)

Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but not in both. Weaknesses and unevenness in one of the foregoing or in spelling result in occasional miscommunication. Areas of weakness may involve detail in the use of simple constructions: irregular plurals of nouns, adjectives; determiners (usage rather than form); prepositions (after verbs or adjectives); negatives (omitting one part; with *passé composé*; with multiple negators). Weaknesses are also observed in more complex structures: tense usage and sequence (*passé composé* vs. *imparfait*; sequence in *si* clauses; future after *quand, dès que*, etc.); passive constructions (rarely uses *on* or reflexive but tends to parallel English with consequent misuse of *être);* word order (especially with *passé composé* plus negation, inversion, adverbs, double object pronouns, or adjectives where meaning affected by position); and relative pronouns (rarely attempts other than *qui/que).* Uses a range of tenses as time indicators including conditional, actual future (in addition to *futur proche),* and possibly *venir de* plus infinitive for immediate past. Some misuse of vocabulary still evident, especially when using a dictionary for words with multiple meanings or where related words carry various functions (*travailler/le travail, université/universitaire),* but does use a dictionary to advantage where a fairly direct bilingual translation and no intralingual ambiguity exists. Shows ability to use circumlocution. Writing is understandable to native speakers not used to reading material written by non-natives, though the style is still obviously foreign.

Superior

Able to use written French effectively in most formal and informal exchanges on practical, social, and professional topics. Can write most types of correspondence, such as memos, social and business letters (with appropriate formulaic introductions and closing), short research papers, and statements of position. Can express hypotheses and conjectures, and present arguments or points of view accurately and effectively. Can write about areas of special interest and handle topics in special fields. Has good control of a full range of structures so that time, description and narration can be used to expand upon ideas. Errors in basic structures are sporadic and not indicative of communicative control. In addition to simple tenses, can use compound tenses to show time relationships among events and to express ideas clearly and coherently, but errors are sometimes made when using complex structures, such as indefinite, relative, or demonstrative pronouns when a range of tenses is necessary within a relatively short discourse. Has lexical control of subordinate conjunctions. Usually employs compulsory subjunctives in the present tense and there is some evidence of the *passé composé* of the subjunctive mood. Generally does not use subjunctive in optional cases to suggest attitude of writer (e.g., after *Croyez-vous que...?).* Has a wide enough vocabulary to convey the message accurately, though style may be foreign. Uses dictionary with a high degree of accuracy to supplement specialized vocabulary or to improve content or style. Although sensitive to differences in formal and informal style, still may not tailor writing precisely or accurately to a variety of audiences (except for personal vs. business correspondence) or styles.